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INCOMING TELEGRAM

PAGE 01 BUENOS 00017 292131Z
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INFO OCT-01 ARA-11 EUR-12 10-14 ADS-00 TRSE-00 AID-07
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INFO AMEMBASSY ASUNCION
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AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
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BUENOS AIRES 1795

USEEC

FROM FOR VATICAN OFFICE:

E.O. 12065: GDS 2/29/86 (HALLMAN, WILLIAM W.) OR-P
TAGS: SHUN, AR
SUBJECT: (U) HUMAN RIGHTS SUMMARY - FEBRUARY 23-29, 1988

REF: BUENOS AIRES 1559

1. (U) THIS WEEK'S HUMAN RIGHTS EVENTS WERE HARDLY
BLIPS ON THE RADAR WE CONTINUE TO USE TO SCAN THE SCENE:

2. (U) THE GENEVA UNCHR MEETINGS ----
ARGENTINA'S DEFENSE AT THE UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION
FOR HUMAN RIGHTS RECEIVED EXTENSIVE PRESS COVERAGE, AS
PART OF WHICH READERS BECAME AWARE--PERHAPS FOR THE
FIRST TIME--OF CLOSE ARGENTINE-USSR COOPERATION TO
FEND OFF RESOLUTIONS UNFRIENDLY TO ARGENTINA. AMBASSA-
DOR ROS'S DEFENSE AGAINST "SECRET CAMPS" CHARGES BY
AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL WAS GIVEN WIDE COVERAGE, ELICITING
A SHARP BUENOS AIRES HERALD EDITORIAL ASKING WHERE THEN
HAD PERSONS GONE WHO WERE DISAPPEARED BY SECURITY FORCES.
A DENIAL OF SECRET CAMPS WAS ALSO ISSUED BY THE FOREIGN
MINISTRY, CITING THE FACT THAT INVESTIGATIONS BY THE
INTER-AMERICAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION HAD FAILED TO
TURN UP EVIDENCE OF THE CAMPS' EXISTENCE.

3. ARGENTINE REPLY TO THE INTER-AMERICAN HUMAN
RIGHTS COMMISSION----
ARGENTINE REPRESENTATIVE AT THE OAS RAUL QUIJANO
LEFT FOR WASHINGTON FEBRUARY 28 TAKING BACK WITH HIM
ARGENTINA'S REPLY TO THE IAHRC REPORT--A REPLY THAT
HAD BEEN DEBATED IN THE JUNTA AND STUDIED BY THE
PRESIDENT AND FOREIGN MINISTER. WEEKEND PAPERS
FEBRUARY 23-24 COVERED EFFORTS ON THE DIPLOMATIC FRONT
INTENDED TO TAKE AWAY SOME OF THE REPORT'S STING:
LONG LUNCHEONS IN WASHINGTON, BRASILIA AND SAN JOSE
(COSTA RICA) BY ARGENTINE AMBASSADORS FOR THE U.S.,
BRAZILIAN AND SALVADORAN MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION.
TWO RANKING GOA MILITARY OFFICIALS COMPLAINED TO
EMBASSIES OF "UNSUBSTANTIATED" CHARGES AGAINST
INDIVIDUALS MADE IN THE REPORT AND OF THE REPORT'S
STARK PRESENTATION OF THE DETAILS OF RIGHTS VIOLATIONS
CASES WITHOUT PUTTING THE SITUATION INTO ITS HISTORICAL
CONTEXT AND WITHOUT NOTING REDUCTIONS IN ALLEGED

VIOLATIONS. FROM A WESTERN EUROPEAN DIPLOMATIC
COLLEAGUE WE LEARNED OF ANOTHER LINE THAT HAS SURFACED
POSSIBLY TO INDUCE REVISION OF THE REPORT'S TOUGHEST
SECTIONS, ALTHOUGH WE WOULD DOUBT THIS WAS DECIDED
AS A POLICY MATTER: IT MAY NOT BE POSSIBLE IN EVERY
CASE, GOES THIS ARGUMENT, FOR GOA TO PROTECT PEOPLE
HERE WHO CAN BE LINED WITH SPECIFIC EVIDENCE GIVEN
IN SPECIFIC CASES FROM OUT-OF-CONTROL ELEMENTS OF
THE SECURITY FORCES THAT MIGHT JUST TAKE MATTERS
INTO THEIR OWN HANDS.
(C) ONE GOVERNMENT CONTACT POINTED OUT HOW TOUGH
ARE THE RIGHT WING CRITICISMS BEING HANDED THE
VIDELA REGIME FOR EVER HAVING INVITED THE COMMISSION
AT ALL, CONTRASTING THE HOSPITABLE ATTITUDE OF GOA
("AND LOOK AT WHAT THEY DID TO US LATER") WITH THE
IRANIAN GOVERNMENT'S TREATMENT OF THE COMMISSION,
NOW IN TEHRAN TO INVESTIGATE THE SHAH'S REGIME--
TREATMENT BELIEVED HERE TO BE DESIGNED SPECIFICALLY
TO HUMILIATE THE UNITED STATES.

4. REPORTED PEN RELEASES----
CASA ROSADA SOURCE TOLD US FEBRUARY 28 THAT
PRESIDENT VIDELA HAD THIS WEEK SIGNED SIXTY DECREES
FREEING PEN PRISONERS, AND BETWEEN FIFTEEN AND TWENTY
RIGHT OF OPTION PERMISSIONS INCLUDING SOME HE DID
NOT SPECIFY WHICH) FOR THE UNITED STATES. THE SAME
SOURCE SPOKE ALSO OF "FIVE HUNDRED" CASES OF PEN
PRISONERS WHO CANNOT BE BROUGHT TO TRIAL BECAUSE OF
LEGALLY UNPROVABLE BUT ALLEGEDLY DANGEROUS CONNECTIONS
WITH TERRORISM. WE CONTINUE TO ASK FOR PUBLICATION
OF OFFICIAL PEN FIGURES. MEANWHILE WE WILL SEEK
VERIFICATION OF CASA ROSADA ESTIMATES. (NOTE: A
SEPARATE MINISTRY OF JUSTICE SOURCE SPOKE LAST WEEK
OF 800 UNCHARGED PEN PRISONERS OF A TOTAL OF 1,500.
PRISONERS FOR CRIMES RELATING TO SUBVERSION. WE
HAVE NOT YET BEEN ABLE TO VERIFY THESE NUMBERS.)

5. (C) VEIL OVER DISAPPEARANCES----
THE SAME SOURCE TOLD US THERE WILL BE NO REPEAT
NO EFFORT ON THE PART OF THE GOVERNMENT TO CLEAR UP
THE SITUATION OF THE DISAPPEARED. TO OPEN THIS
MATTER WOULD LEAD TO ENDLESS AND DAMAGING QUESTIONS,
HE ASSERTED. FURTHER, SENIOR PARTY LEADERS "ARE
MATURE ENOUGH TO RECOGNIZE" TOO--OUR CASA ROSADA
CONTACT TOLD US--THAT NOTHING IS TO BE GAINED BY
ALLOWING VENTILATION OF THE ISSUE. (NOTE: A PERONIST
OFFICIAL THIS WEEK BELIED THIS BY STATING PUBLICLY
THAT THERE CAN BE NO DIALOGUE UNTIL THE MATTER OF
THE DETAINED AND DISAPPEARED HAS BEEN RESOLVED.)

THESE COMMENTS ARE IN KEEPING WITH A GENERALLY
HARDER LINE TAKEN IN THE PAST COUPLE OF WEEKS BY
GOA OFFICIALS UP AND DOWN THE LINE, WHO SEEM
DETERMINED TO DEFEND ARGENTINA THROUGH WHAT THEY
APPARENTLY REGARD AS ESPECIALLY TOUGH PERIOD OF
FOREIGN CRITICISM.

6. (U) ANOTHER JEHOVAH'S WITNESS CASE----
THE CASE OF A PERUVIAN MEDICAL STUDENT UNDER
DEPORTATION ORDER FOR BEING A MEMBER OF THE JEHOVAH'S
WITNESSES WAS THIS WEEK PUT IN SUSPENSE BY IMMIGRATION
OFFICIALS WHILE INTERIOR MINISTRY PEOPLE FURTHER STUDY
THE CASE. THE CASE OF GUILLERMO BROSSET MASSEY IS,
WE BELIEVE, UNUSUAL IN THAT HIS DEPORTATION WAS
SOUGHT FOR THE SOLE REASON OF HIS RELIGION.
CASTRO

ARGENTINE
OFFICIAL
SAYS THERE ARE
500
UNCHARGED
PEN
DETAINEEES
WHO
WON'T
BE TRIED

HOW
MANY
POLITICAL
PRISONERS?

JUSTICE
MINISTRY
OFFICIAL
SAYS NO
ACCOUNTING
FOR
DISAPPEARED
PERSONS
WILL
HAPPEN.

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